

15. West University Public Safety Substation arson, Eugene, Oregon, September 6, 2000



Participants:

Stanislas Meyerhoff

Kevin Tubbs

Chelsea Gerlach



At approximately 4:15 a.m. on September 6, 2000, a small fire was observed on the west side of the West University Public Safety Substation at 791 East 13th Avenue in Eugene. Harold Allen Snider, an employee of Pinkerton Security Company, ran to the location and saw a bicycle leaning against the west wall of the substation, just beneath a window. In a basket behind the bicycle seat was a burning container. Snider grabbed the handle bars and attempted to pull the bicycle away from the building. The front tire was locked to the frame, causing it to fall over as Snider attempted to drag the bicycle away from the building. As he did so, liquid spilled from

the container and burst into flames, engulfing the bicycle and almost burning Snider. Moments later, Celso Jacquez, a Sacred Heart Hospital security officer, responded to the scene and used a fire extinguisher to put out the fire.

Investigation determined this to be an arson fire, caused by placing an incendiary device on the back of the bicycle against the west wall of the substation. Because of the quick response by Snider and Jacquez, damage was minimal, estimated to be \$1,750.00, for replacement of the broken window of the substation and damage to a nearby vehicle. A backpack was found near the northeast corner of the substation. It contained a second incendiary device which had failed to function as intended.

Chelsea Gerlach, Stanislas Meyerhoff and Kevin Tubbs were responsible for the arson and placement of the incendiary device which failed to function as intended. They selected the target because they believed the Eugene activist community would deem it popular, particularly after police reaction to recent street protests and similar activities, and in order to test a new design for an incendiary device.

Gerlach and Meyerhoff built and placed the incendiary devices. They wore painters' suits, hair nets and two or three pairs of gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints or DNA on the devices. On the morning of the arson, Gerlach, Meyerhoff and Tubbs parked a vehicle near 28th and Alder in Eugene, and rode their bicycles to the area of the substation. They each had radios and Tubbs was the lookout, stationed just south of 13th and Alder near the 7-11 store. Meyerhoff rode his bicycle to the substation, placed it against the building, and walked away. Gerlach had the second incendiary device in her backpack. She parked her bicycle in an alley just north of 13th and Alder and walked to the substation. She placed the backpack behind a bush near the